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The concept of blocking any enemy's logistic arteries through aerial bombardment has always been appealing. Successful interdiction presents a quick method of cutting off the enemy's resupply with relatively small risk. The problem, however, is that an interdiction campaign can absorb an enormous number of sorties and bombs. Unless a program is carefully conceived and tailored to specific objectives, it rarely works. Interdiction alone is no panacea. The more rudimentary the logistic system, the more difficult the task of effectively cutting it. When supplies move by rail or when bridges over major water obstacles are involved, the effects are longer lasting and the task is relatively

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easier. But when supplies move by truck convoy at night over gravel roads constructed and repaired by coolie labor, the task is formidable. The road itself is not an easy target. Repairs can usually be made rapidly or by-passes constructed.

Despite these difficulties, the concept is being tested in Laos. The Communist forces in Laos and, to an unknown extent, the VC forces in South Vietnam depend on truck traffic moving into Laos through Nape Pass on Route 8 and Mu Gia Pass on Route 12. This traffic then moves south, mainly over Route 23, to distribution points throughout southern Laos or to truck heads in the infiltration system where coolie trains and bicycle porters take over for further movement into South Vietnam.

Nape and Mu Gia Passes present the best areas outside North Vietnam to put the squeeze on this system. A point about six miles inside Laos was selected, just southeast of Mu Gia Pass. Here Route 12 follows an ascending grade which hugs the side of a steep escarpment. Several switchbacks provided the possibility for landslides.

On 28 February 16 US aircraft dropped over 100 bombs on the selected choke point. Slightly over half of these bombs had instantaneous fuzes; about one-fourth were set to detonate at random times during the next 24 hours; the remaining bombs were set to go off at delayed times of up to 144 hours after impact. This seeding was designed to maintain the blockage

by keeping road repair crews from venturing into the area for at least six days.

Results were extremely good. The instantaneous bursts set off a landslide on one of the switchback curves which buried about 30 yards of roadway under a massive pile of earth and rocks. Physical effects of the delay fuze bombs were not so spectacular. It may be that a number of these were detonated by the earlier bursts or buried under the debris. Nevertheless, photography obtained 25 hours after the attack revealed eight new bomb craters, two of which created additional cuts in the road. Psychological effects were apparently fully successful; any efforts which may have been made to open the road during this period found a warm reception.

No additional reseeded was accomplished, however, and visual reconnaissance of the choke point on 8 March indicated the cut had been leveled and scraped by a grader. Tracks indicated recent use of the repaired roadway. These repairs were probably made some time after the last delay action bombs exploded.

Prompt repair of this route indicates its importance to the Communists.

The experience of the Mu Gia Pass choke point indicates that any interdiction program in Laos must be persistently pursued with re-seeding missions with delay fuzed bombs until heavy rains further complicate the enemy's repair problem. [REDACTED]

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ROLLING THUNDER

On 5 March, USAF/VNAF forces launched strikes on two targets in North Vietnam. Unlike previous actions in August 1964 and February 1965, these strikes were not reprisals for Viet Cong or DRV specific acts. Rather they were manifestations of joint US RVN agreement to carry the action to the DRV until Hanoi ceases support of the insurgency in South Vietnam. "Until the regime in Hanoi decides to halt its intervention in the south or until ef-

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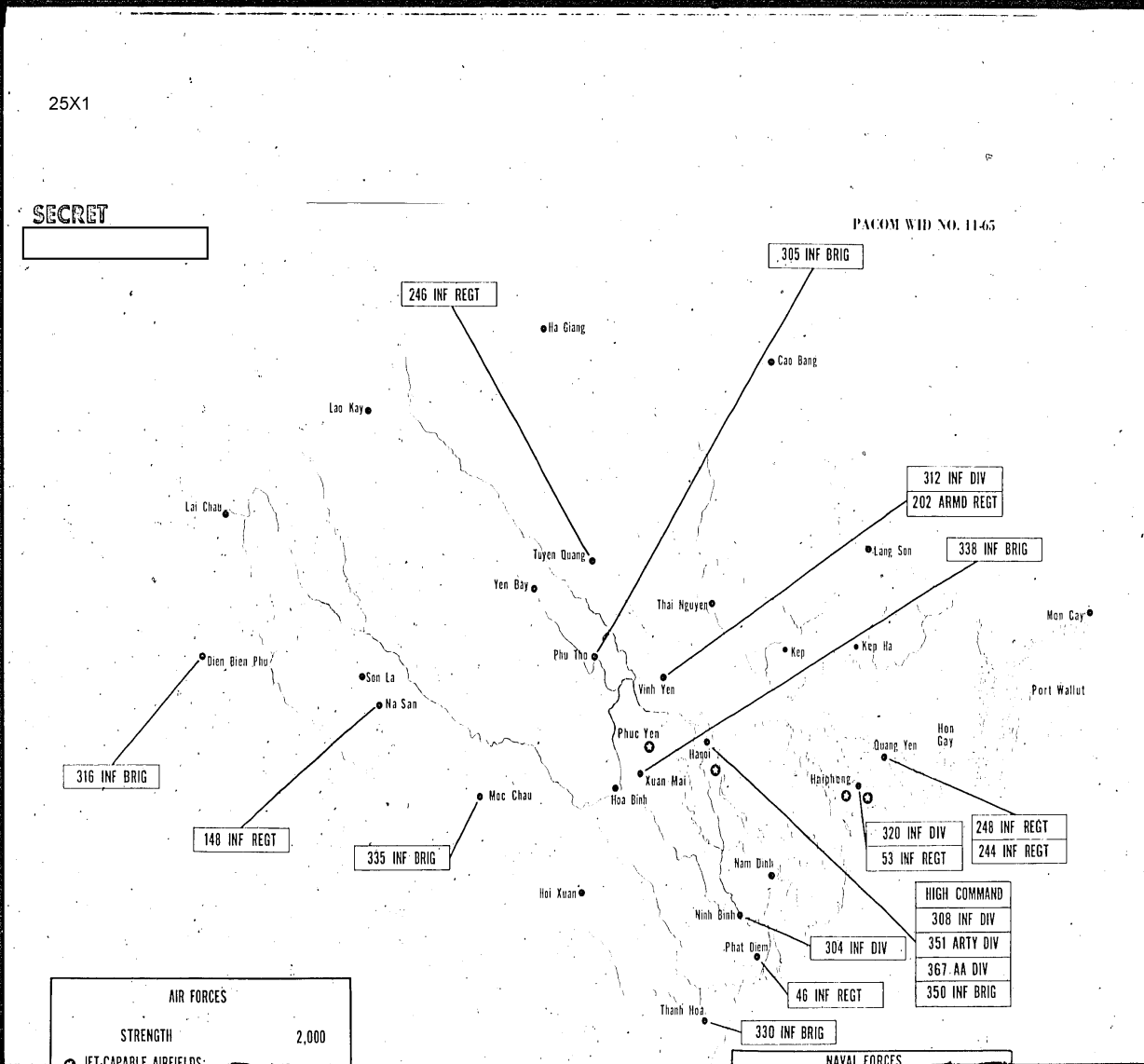
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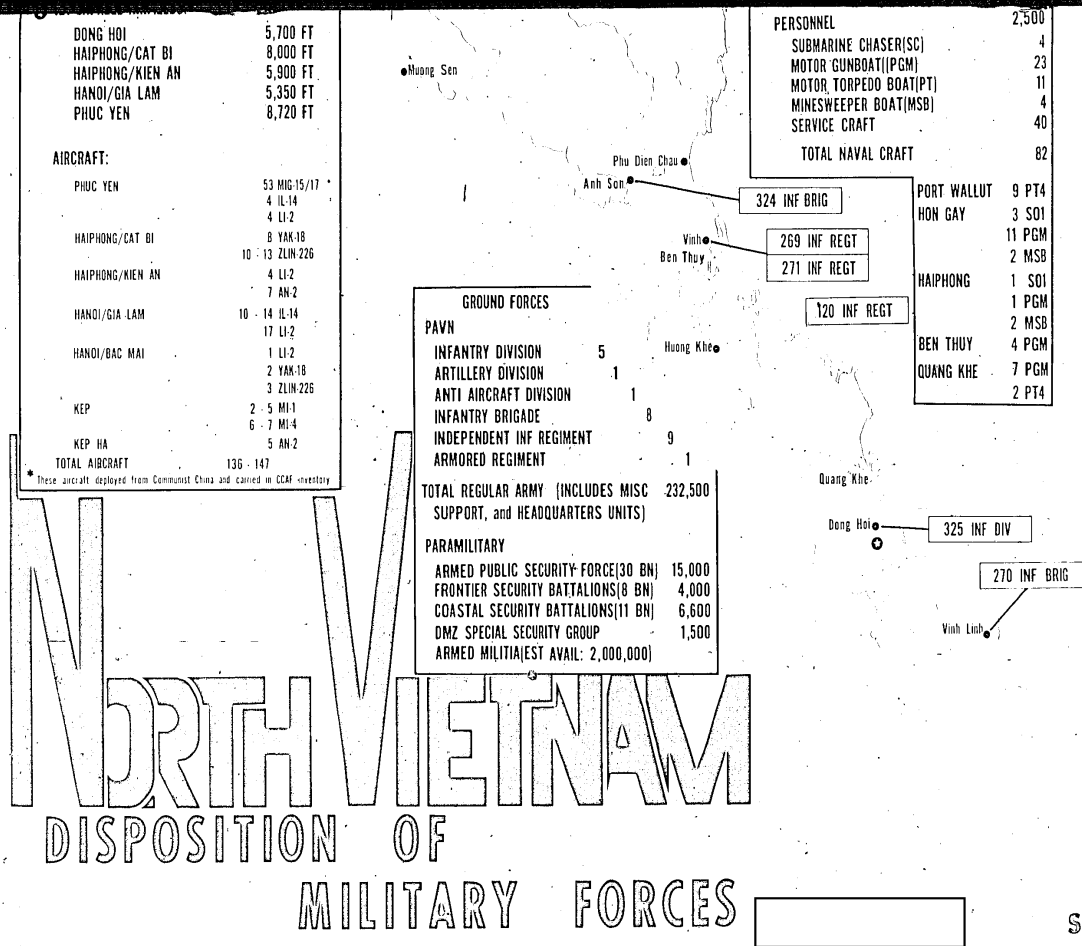
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fective steps are taken to maintain peace and security in the area, the governments of South Vietnam and the United States will continue necessary measures of defense against the Communist armed aggression coming from North Vietnam," is the official US position in a paper issued on 27 February.

The targets were well selected. Quang Khe naval base, a probable port of departure for seaborne infiltrations and supplies and Xom Bang army supply depot, a probable ordnance storage area, from which ammunition and supplies are fed to Viet Cong units through the many land infiltration routes.

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VNAF A-1s accompanied by USAF jets who provided cover and "flak" suppression hit the naval base at Quang Khe. The post-strike photography indicates a job well done. The continuing function of this base in support of the war in Vietnam will be hampered by the damage and destruction imposed. (See photos 1, 2, 3 and 4).

BDA photography of the USAF strike against Xom Bang indicates that this target was also

well covered. Xom Bang was severely crippled and very few buildings were left standing (See photos 5 and 6). Enemy AAA at both targets was light to medium but extremely effective; downing two USAF F-105s, two F-100s and one VNAF A-1. One F-105 was lost when it ran out of fuel. However, the effectiveness of rescue units and procedures resulted in five of the six pilots being recovered.

Reaction from Hanoi, Peking and Moscow
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PACIFIC PERSPECTIVES

HUK Resurgence In Philippines ?

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Hukbong Magpapalayang Bayan (People's Liberation Army), popularly dubbed as the Huks, has been "laying low" since its failure ten years ago to deliver the Philippines to the Communist fold. The 1964 capture of Jesus Lava (WID 27-64), Huk supremo, was heralded as the death knell of the fighting element of the Philippine Communist Party. But Huk remnants die hard and Manila papers have recently been full of hints at a Huk comeback, citing a string of assassinations and strong arm activity in northern Luzon.

It is probably more correct to say that rather than a resurgence of Huk strength on Luzon, there is an improving atmosphere for a re-emergence of Communist insurgency. When the Huk movement was defeated and scattered during the mid-1950s by the Magsaysay administration, there was general recognition that subversion should not be fought with negative weapons alone. An effective program of social and economic reform, offering hope to the masses, should replace whatever goals the Communist and left-wing elements had been dangling before the populace. Nevertheless, despite some progress under current President Diosdado Macapagal, promises of economic reform and an improvement in the law and order situation remain difficult to achieve. In effect, there may be a race between the accomplishment of such reforms and a growing restiveness and disillusionment on the part of village peasants and poverty stricken urban dwellers who desire a better life and are beginning to question why they cannot have it.

The Huks, in their current strength, do not have the capability to challenge the authority of the government by organized force. Philippine Constabulary (PC) officials maintain dossiers on about 150 hard core Huks still roaming the Mount Arayat region in Pampanga Prov-

ince north of Manila. Lists are also maintained of some 1,200-1,600 suspected collaborators and contact men. Other estimates claim that as many as 12,000 persons hold varying degrees of sympathy for Communist causes. There exists an absence of hard information on various aspects of the Huk problem leading to a rash of unsubstantiated reports whenever a Huk resurgence is mentioned.

The Communist organization in the Philippines is unsure about what course to take. Central Luzon, as well as the rest of the Philippines, today is plagued with conditions which might encourage the growth of a Communist Party. The younger members are reported to prefer a legal battle exploiting poor economic

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growth, failures of the government in many areas, low public morality and corruption of officialdom. Another "golden opportunity" is rising nationalism wherein the United States has become the perfect straw man because of recent incidents at Clark Air Base and Subic Bay (WID 4-65). On the other hand, the "old guard" Huks have shown little interest in an ideological struggle and often act more like bandits than revolutionaries. Their current activity centers on liquidations of uncooperative public officials and former Huks who have reformed, extortion of "tong" from farmers and merchants and other criminal activities. Like organized crime in America, the Huks have invested in legitimate enterprises such as taxi fleets, motor repair shops, entertainment houses, and tractor and thresher rental firms. Enterprising Huks have even sponsored beauty queen contests as well as gaining control of houses of prostitution. One PC official states that in some areas the Huks take in more money than the municipal tax collectors.

Killings are what make the front pages of the Manila press. The Huks are said to have "liquidation lists" of political figures, officials, and others who have gotten in the way. The

question of complicity of town police forces has extended even to Angeles City, just outside Clark Air Base. There have also been reports of plans to assassinate US male and female personnel stationed at Clark. The assassination of the mayor of Magalang City a year ago is still unsolved. Two days before Christmas the mayor of Arayat was gunned down and within a few weeks five more persons on the Huk list had been murdered from ambush. The two mayors were alleged to have been elected with Huk support and then killed in revenge for pledging allegiance to President Macapagal and his programs. Such violence has turned many local police forces into mere bodyguards for the mayor to the detriment of law enforcement work.

Additionally, the Huks exert a certain influence in politics. Many officials other than the two liquidated mayors are alleged to welcome Huk money and muscle at election time. The Huks are reputed to have plans for support of a fair number of candidates in the coming November elections, regardless of their political party affiliations. With an unusually "hot" campaign in prospect, the Huks are liable to get a lot more publicity than they deserve. Already charges are being aired that

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aspirants for office are running on Huk backing. Unfortunately, military operations against the Huks are likely to become embroiled in the campaign. Some politicians with Huk connections in bygone days are charging that Macapagal is "front-paging" the Huk danger merely to ensure their defeat at the polls. Also, the role of the armed forces in overseeing an election without violence, always a touchy issue, will probably be the subject of further attacks by the government's political opposition.

A captured Huk document reveals that the organization has embarked on a Five Year Plan for progressive building. Involved in the scheme are recruitment and military training of new members with emphasis being placed on the growing ranks of young unemployed, the procurement of weapons, and development of sabotage materials. The end goal, of course, is a nation-wide struggle to seize national power. In their current spate of activity, the Huks have shown the capability to win the support of many village people, either through indoctrination or coercion. But hampering the Huks' progress toward their goal is their apparent greedy preference for profit from racketeering. Additionally, top Huk leadership is not united with the strongest contender for suprema. Pedro Taruc, reported to be suffering from hernia and stomach trouble.

Chances for Communist progress in the Philippines would be enhanced if there was a meeting of the minds between the Huks and the more traditional Communists who prefer to push the struggle among labor unions, university students, unemployed city masses, and intellectuals. In Manila, the growing sense of nationalism, frustration with lack of opportunity, and the desire of many students to assert themselves as a factor in the national scene affords attractive opportunities for Communist Party recruitment. Unrest among the intellectual element, including university faculties, art and literary figures as well as newspapers is also increasing. But the Communists who prefer the legal parliamentary struggle are also lacking in a strong central leadership. Any polarization of all elements of Communism in the Philippines will likely take years instead of months.

Some support from outside sources for Philippine Communists does exist. Indonesian efforts are concentrated on subversive infiltration of Mindanao and the southern islands as well as subverting students and the press (WIDs 44-64 and 2-65). It is difficult to point out any hard proof that either the Indonesian Government or the Indonesian Communist Party have any hand in Huk activity in northern Luzon. But should there be a Communist

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takeover in Indonesia, this possibility would become an immediate and serious threat. Subversion from Red China at the present time likewise appears to play a non-existent or negligible role in the Huk movement. Chinese Communists are currently more concerned in influencing the overseas Chinese in the Philippines.

With the objective of destroying the Huk organization during 1965, the Philippine Defense Department has created Task Force Tamaraw. This force has recently spread 2,000 men around "Huk land," concentrating in Pampanga Province. The immediate objective of the task force is the killing of all Huk leaders in the area. Some progress has been made in infiltrating Huk intelligence nets

and dossiers on the more important Huks have been updated. PC "killer units" dressed in civilian clothes are operating north of Manila and have managed to spot and liquidate some top Huk chiefs. The PC commander in the Mount Arayat area claims his civilian clothed teams liquidated four and captured seven Huks during January. Pedro Taruc is of course the prime target. In addition to these "sub-rosa" operations, Task Force Tamaraw is undertaking a psychological operation to win the confidence of local inhabitants. However, many people remain passive, due to fear of Huk reprisals once the troops are withdrawn. Since it is expected that Task Force Tamaraw's strength will be depleted for peacekeeping duty during the elections, its commanders consider it essential to make an all out drive now.

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The final elimination of the total interior Communist threat to the Philippines depends on the accomplishment of certain programs which pose difficulties for the national administration with its empty treasury. Achievement of badly needed social and economic reforms would blunt the appeal of the orthodox urban Communist and dampen the Huk movement as well. Modern communications has broken down the isolation between urban and rural Filipinos, and pressure for specific beneficial changes, rather than rosy prospects for an uncertain time in the future, are mounting. A perpetuation of present conditions will prolong and nurture Communist strength. A second requirement is a significant improvement in the enforcement of law and order.

Eliminating Huks is more difficult amid the prevailing atmosphere of banditry and lawlessness throughout the entire nation. More police and constabulary is not the sole answer in view of the complex political and psychological aspects of the crime problem.

Little progress in combatting either Communists or criminals can be expected during the ridiculously long Philippine election campaign. Once the dust of "vote day" settles, it can be hoped that the Philippines can devote attention to the most basic requirement of internal security—effective leadership from the highest levels down through the lowest echelons.

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THUNDER

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was much as expected. Loud protests, demonstrations, appeals to international bodies, and excessive claims of aircraft destroyed. What future reaction will be is speculative. It will probably include additional security pre-

cautions, attempts to strengthen the air defense structure and exhaustive diplomatic and political efforts to have these attacks terminated. It was obvious the attacks were effective and hurt all the way to Hanoi. [REDACTED]

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